

He is a hero for his selfless service to our Nation. He is a hero for paying the ultimate price for freedom and liberty.

Today, I echo the words written by neighbors of Sergeant Walsh's parents, Maggie and Jerry: "We know that no words we could say can comfort you, but our thoughts are with you and our hearts ache for you." Our hearts ache for Sergeant Walsh's wife Julie, his sons Triston and Tanner, and the many loved ones and friends Sergeant Walsh leaves behind.

Madam Speaker, Sergeant Walsh is a true hero. Today, with a heavy heart, I extend to Sergeant Walsh's family my deepest sympathies. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring the patriotism and selfless sacrifice of SGT Nicholas Walsh.

TRIBUTE TO MR. JACK KESSLER

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of a constituent of mine, Mr. Jack Kessler; specifically his forty-two years of service as President of the Putnam County Library Board.

As the board's founding President, Jack oversaw the birth of the county's library which in 1961 consisted of little more than a bookmobile and storage house. From those humble beginnings, however, the library blossomed. By the time Jack retired, after four decades of leadership, the Putnam County Library had grown to comprise five buildings, including four branches servicing communities across the county.

Jack left another, more direct, legacy when he retired. His daughter Jackie now serves as the library's director. Noting the family connection, Jack jokes he always has more than enough books to read.

Madam Speaker, for much of American history local libraries have provided communities with opportunities for advancement through education. Putnam County Library's branches, summer programs and volume after volume of books has benefited generations of West Virginia residents. The most enduring aspect of Jack Kessler's legacy is the benefit for generations yet to come.

I thank Jack for his years of service and Putnam County is fortunate to call Jack one of its own.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, July 16, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 1980, H.R. 1982, and H.R. 799.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 630 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1980, to authorize appropriations for the Housing Assistance Council, I would have voted, "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 631 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1982, the Rural Housing and Economic Develop-

ment Improvement Act of 2007, I would have voted, "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 632 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 799, the Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments, I would have voted, "aye."

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO REFORM FEDERAL PROTECTIVE SERVICE GUARD CONTRACTING OPERATIONS

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today I introduce a bill that I believe Congress must pass forthwith to assure that Federal Protective Service, FPS, guard contractors are capable, responsible, and ethical as required by the Federal Acquisition Regulations. It was clear to me that this bill was necessary when a vital security contractor issue emerged from our Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management hearing on June 21, 2007. A security guard contractor had failed to pay its guards from FPS funds. At the hearing we learned that Weldon Waites, who had served five years in prison for money laundering and fraud, was the de facto owner, with his wife, of STARTECH, despite federal law barring felons from owning companies that do business with the federal government. In fact, it was Waites, not his wife, who came forward to defend the company after it failed to pay its 600 D.C.-based guards despite receipt of funds from FPS for payment. Mr. Waites' testimony concerning his operational control of the company was nothing short of a case study in evasion of existing law by merely taking advantage of obvious loopholes. Today I am filing the Federal Protective Service Guard Contracting Reform Act to prohibit FPS from contracting with any security guard service that is "owned, controlled or operated by an individual who has been convicted of a felony." My bill would eliminate proxy ownership of vital FPS contracting operations by relatives or spouses. The bill would be effective immediately upon passage and therefore would mean that FPS would be required to dismiss any felon exercising control over any FPS contracting operation now, not merely future contractors.

My bill reminds us that we must not lose sight of the mission of private contract guards who serve the federal government—to guard federal employees and sites as vital as nuclear plants and military posts against terrorism and crime, and in the case of Jenkins Security, two secure federal power plants here. The STARTECH example of unpaid contract guards and apparent misuse of federal funds directed to pay guards demonstrated why federal law requires these businesses have a "satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics."

Contract security officers are a critical component of federal strategies to protect the safety and security of federal employees and vital federal facilities. In the federal sector, security guards, many of whom carry guns, are as essential to protecting federal employees and sites as members of FPS. Although not a replacement for public law enforcement offi-

cers, whether local police officers, or FPS law enforcement officers, private security guards, like peace officers, are engaged in counter-terrorism activities in the post 9/11 environment. It was 9/11 and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security that led to the transfer of the FPS from the General Services Administration to the new Department of Homeland Security. Since the transfer, however, FPS has become even more dependant on contract guards, who have grown rapidly to 15,000, while the number FPS guards is down from an authorized 1,450 to about 1,000. In passing appropriations for FPS this year, the Appropriations Committee indicated that the administration is seeking to totally eliminate FPS, the official police force for federal government work sites and facilities. The Appropriation Committee took action that assures that FPS officer levels as of 2006 will remain in place unless certain strong conditions are met. Today's legislation concerning the vitality and integrity of contracting operations assume even greater importance in light of FPS downsizing.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

A TRIBUTE TO JOAN CACCAMO

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Brooklyn resident Ms. Joan Caccamo. Joan received her bachelor of science degree in Management from St. Francis College in Brooklyn in 1983; she later earned a master's degree with a specialty in Administration and Supervision from Fordham University.

Joan taught Business Education and Computer Science for 12 years and worked as a high school director of development and is currently employed as the assistant director of recreation, intramurals and athletics as well as a senior woman administrator at Brooklyn College.

Joan continues to give back to her community. She is currently the department president of the American Legion Auxiliary who has chosen for her special project the Special Olympics of New York. Under her leadership, members of the American Legion have donated more than \$40,000 to the project. Joan has traveled throughout New York State visiting 62 counties promoting Special Olympics, veterans', children's, and community issues.

Joan's accomplishments are many and include; the Empire Girl's Program service as housemother, vice-chair and chair of the Veterans' Affairs and Rehabilitation, certified leadership instructor, and the winner of the Public Relations Chair National Award.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Ms. Joan Caccamo who has given more than 40 years of volunteer service. I'd also like to honor her for her accomplishments as a teacher and caring member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Ms. Joan Caccamo.